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FROM: 101

TO: Secretary of State

NO: 361, 1 OCTOBER 1959.

PRIORITY:

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REF ID: A6731  
NOTIFICATION  
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I AM SERIOUSLY CONCERNED THAT AT THIS TIME WE ARE STILL WITHOUT AGREED TRIPARTITE POSITION DEAL WITH ANOTHER FLAG INCIDENT BERLIN.

FULLY CONCUR WITH GENERAL HAMLETT'S OCTOBER 22 STATEMENT OUR POSITION (BERLIN'S 406 TO DEPARTMENT). IN MY VIEW, IT WOULD BE POLITICALLY DISASTROUS TO HAVE REPETITION INDECISIVE OCTOBER 6 DEVELOPMENTS. MOREOVER, GIVEN STATED WESTERN POSITION AND COMMITMENT FOLLOWING FIRST INCIDENT (COMMANDANTS' TALKING PAPER TO ZAKHAROV, BERLIN'S 367 TO DEPARTMENT), IT SEEMS TO ME WE WOULD SUFFER IRREPARABLE LOSS PRESTIGE AND FIND MOST DIFFICULT MAINTAIN OUR PRESENT POSITION BERLIN, V/S-A-V/S BOTH BERLINERS AND SOVIETS, IF WE STOOD ASIDE WHILE GDR GOONS REHOISTED THEIR FLAGS WITH IMPUNITY, OR WE PRETENDED WE WERE REALLY DEALING WITH SITUATION BY SELECTING ARBITRARILY TO BE BROUGHT DOWN SOME NUMBER FLAGS FEWER THAN THOSE HOISTED. THIS HAPPENED LAST TIME. SOME FLAGS WERE LOWERED, BUT COMMUNISTS JUST AS QUICKLY REHOISTED THEM. PROBLEM IS ESSENTIALLY ONE OF PRINCIPLE -- DEMONSTRATING SOVIETS OUR DETERMINATION MEET PROVOCATIVE CHALLENGE OUR POSITION IN BERLIN.

GIVEN PRESENT INTERNATIONAL POLITICAL CLIMATE AND BERLIN'S

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10-26-59, 6 P.M., 7 P.M. FROM BRUN

AN ASSESSMENT OF WEST BERLIN CAPABILITIES (BERLIN'S 415 TO DEPARTMENT), THERE WOULD SEEM BE NO BETTER TIME THAN PRESENT FOR US TAKE STRIKING MEASURES PREVENT COMMUNIST FLOUTING OUR AUTHORITY. AS I SEE IT, THERE PROBABLY HAS BEEN NO TIME IN RECENT PAST, NOR CAN WE COUNT ON MANY OCCASIONS IN FUTURE, WHEN WE WILL BE ABLE DEAL AS EFFECTIVELY AS WE NOW CAN WITH CHALLENGE THIS KIND IN BERLIN, WITHOUT INCURRING SERIOUS RISKS EITHER TO OURSELVES OR CAUSE OF PEACE. IF THERE IS ANY VALIDITY ALLEGED PEACE AIMS USSR, UNLIKELY SOVIETS WOULD NOW TAKE RISKS WAR OR EVEN DRAWING SANITIZED COPY ATTENTION NEED WESTERN FORCES IN BERLIN. SENSITIVE INFORMATION DELETED

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STATE

IN THIS CONNECTION, CONSIDER IT ABSOLUTELY ESSENTIAL BERLIN BE GIVEN TRIPARTITELY AGREED INSTRUCTIONS SOONEST TO REPLY QUESTIONS RAISED BY BERLIN POLICE -- SCOPE OF OPERATION; AUTHORIZED WEAPONS AND ALLIED GARRISON SUPPORT (BERLIN'S 415 TO DEPARTMENT). AFRAID IF WE WAIT UNTIL DETAILS FRENCH ALLEGEDLY SEEKING PROVIDED, WE WILL FIND OURSELVES WITHOUT OPERATIONAL PLAN AT MOST CRITICAL MOMENT.

BRIEF

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Note: Read by Mr. Hillenbrand (GER) 6 p.m. 10-26-59 CWO-M

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